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Educating for Democracy: Entrepreneurship Education as a Democratic Discipline?

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In the Western world, we have an almost fetishized obsession with education. Current debates concern the problems relating to our increasingly instrumentalized approach to educational systems, where critics lament the fact that we are neglecting the importance of educating simply for the sake of providing people with an education (Biesta, 2010a). Education does not have to be targeted for it to be beneficial. The effective dissemination of knowledge, along with more democratized educational systems, has contributed to many beneficial societal developments. From the concrete, where knowledge and education about basic hygiene and antiseptic practices helped drastically decrease hospital deaths (Pittet & Boyce, 2001, p. 9f) to more general societal changes, where better educational levels seem to correlate strongly with increased income equality (De Gregorio & Lee, 2002), education can make a difference. The prevalence of democratic ideals in Western societies can in part be attributed to mandatory education, where students, in addition too basic academic and scholarly skills, are also taught about the values of living in a democratic society (Hoge, 2002, p. 105f).

I will here attempt to provide an educational perspective on the actualization of democracy myself, albeit with a few caveats. The first one is that it will not be a purely pedagogical perspective, but one related to my own field: entrepreneurship education. From my point of view, I have become aware of the great opportunities that could arise from applying ideas from this educational field to the discussion about how to actualize democracy. However, entrepreneurship education is not problem free. It has elements that could work against actualizing democracy that need to be disclosed, which I will divulge later, as they pertain to my own criticisms of entrepreneurship education as well. We will encounter these when I clarify later in the chapter why entrepreneurship education is only one avenue worth exploring in giving education a larger role to play in actualizing democracy, since its problems constitute in essence a counterargument. What I am writing here is an attempt to be constructive within my field by exploring how else entrepreneurship education can be employed—or it might be the ramblings of an angry young man with a desire to upset the status quo. At the very

least, I try to do so in a constructive rather than destructive manner. A second caveat is that this is not an attempt to provide a universal solution or answer to the question of how to actualize democracy. What I will explore is how we might cultivate the psychological characteristics presented by Fathali Moghaddam in his paper "*The Road to* A*ctualized Democracy: A Psychological Exploration*" (this volume). These are characteristics that he sees as the foundational attributes needed if we are to bring about a more democratic world. As it was rightly pointed out during the lectures, Moghaddam presents these characteristics in a sense as taken for granted, and does not consider how some of them might be impossible to achieve, or even unfeasible to cultivate in many places around the world, where democracy is nothing more than an abstract concept.

In this chapter, I will not debate Moghaddam's characteristics, as I find that his outline serves very well to describe the desired or idealized psychological traits of a good democratic citizen. Still, I agree with the critique that we should stop and consider not what the characteristics are or should be, but how to cultivate them. The point made here ties into the last caveat, namely that my chapter is predominantly aimed at the state of democracy as it is in Western societies. The societies that can benefit from looking at reforming adapting new educational practices are those where democracy is already said to be the norm, although that does not mean that it is thriving (Ernø, 2016) or has ever fully been achieved, since we are far from having national democracies with full, informed, and equal participation in decision-making processes independent of financial interests (Moghaddam, this volume, p. 3f), where "We, the people," are able to exercise any direct control (Cartledge, 2016, pp. 305 – 307). A legitimate criticism therefore would be that that I am dealing with democracy in a Western-centric manner, and do not fully consider the places where the road to democracy is not so much obstructed as almost nonexistent.

So, to sum up, this chapter is not a critique of Moghaddam's idea about what characterizes the democratic person, but an acknowledgement of the values they represent. In presenting this, I recognize that, while I am in agreement as to what traits are desirable if an actualized democracy is to be achieved, the most pressing question about how to reach them still remains. In this chapter, I will highlight one possible road that can bring us closer to what Moghaddam imagines. I will focus on education, and add perspectives from my work with entrepreneurship education to show how many

of the democratic ideals attributed to personal characteristics are imbued in the pedagogical practices that reside strongly in this educational field. Before getting to the above point, a brief attempt at showing how education has been used as an emancipatory tool will be given in order to contextualize why elements from an entrepreneurship educational practice might be helpful for actualizing democracy.

Emancipation through Education

As we venture further into the topic of education, it is necessary to emphasize that questions about education cannot be separated from the political sphere. Therefore, as the topic is dealt with, it will be nigh impossible not to become normative (Suissa, 2010). Of course, there is a purpose to this. The point is exactly to argue how education can be applied to further a certain line of thinking that is in accordance with a set of ideals that pertain to democracy. To iterate, the title of Moghaddam's chapter in this book is "The Road *to* Actualized Democracy"; the implication being that we are looking at education as a tool that can be used to influence how individuals perceive what it means to be a democratic citizen. This is in line with much current criticism of how education has become too instrumentalized and that its functions need to be made explicit from the outset (Biesta, 2010a; 2010b; Giroux, 2002). Here it is additionally argued that the civic focus in educational efforts needs strengthening. This is where it becomes obvious that there is some taking sides in a larger debate involved, one that is fundamentally about how one thinks society should be organized. In this section, I will briefly go through some an examples that show the role education played for the rebellious thinker Paulo Freire, where it is seen as the means through which social change can be instigated. The social change that is wanted is, as we shall see, directed towards improving people's degree of freedom, along with advocating for ways to increase equality. Freedom and equality are values that are at the heart of democratic ideals as they are understood today (Cartledge, 2016, p. xviii). In order to contextualize Freire, I will use other academics who have drawn on anarchism as a lens through which to look upon society. There is much to be gained from looking at anarchism as a theoretical gateway into a political line of thinking. While I do not claim that Paulo Freire was an anarchist himself, his writing is not too dissimilar to the thoughts predominantly advocated among authors that represent anarchism in academia today. As in Freire, education also been regarded by anarchism as one of the most important foundations for keeping in touch with moral values and principles, and

as a way to provide conditions wherein freedom becomes attainable (Suissa, 2010, p. 39). Anarchism is not about chaos, but has historically concerned itself with the question of how to achieve more equality and freedom (which is not too dissimilar to the sacred values of democracy either). So not only are anarchist ideals aligned with democratic ideals, but I also provide a framework for thinking against the conventional. Rather than lacking a goal in its critique, as could be said of much post-modern theory, it demonstrates a clear, normative goal that works towards freedom and equality. I should perhaps be a bit more careful in saying 'a clear goal,' as there are many brands of anarchism that do not always see eye to eye. But on a topic like education, where politics cannot be separated from analysis, I see the selected parts of anarchism inspired theory, presented below, as a valuable tool to draw upon as inspiration.

There have been many attempts at harnessing the power of education as the primary means towards emancipation from perceived oppression. Early anarchist thinkers acknowledged that: "(…) they saw a crucial role for education – and specifically moral education – to foster the benevolent aspects of human nature and so create and sustain stateless societies" (Suissa, 2010, p. 38). While this is not necessarily a goal everyone can agree upon, it does show the immense power attributed to education as a path through which social change be instigated. One notable example of someone who sought to reform education is Paulo Freire. He wrote the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* in 1968, and incidentally created what would become the cornerstone of critical pedagogy. According to Freire's thinking, it is through education that dialogue can be achieved. Education is communication, wherein the voices of the oppressed are heard and given legitimacy. It is only through those means a society can achieve what Freire calls an "authentic revolution" (Freire, 1968/2005, p. 127f). By authentic, Freire refers to a revolution that is done with and by the people, and not by someone on their behalf. The latter would be more in line with military coups, which do not rely on dialogue, but on deceit and force (Ibid, p. 128). One could easily fear that this type of revolution would only lead to more oppression. Freire realizes that some will call the dialogical approach idealistic, but argues that there is nothing more real than the relationship between people, and the oppressed against the oppressing class. From this, it follows that only through communication can a point be reached where the rule of the oppressors can be overturned.

Among Freire's critics, we find in particular the poststructuralist philosophers that emerged during the 1970s, who opposed the stringent classification of people as belonging to certain classes. Todd May (1994) has written a thorough exploration of what it would mean if something like anarchism were to be adapted to a poststructuralist framework. Two main points from May's writing are relevant here, as they pertain to how oppression should be fought. First, anarchism has traditionally sought freedom and equality by inciting its followers to take actions against "the powers that be," which has often been imagined as a person or an entity (such as the government) (May, 1994, p. 11). A main line of thinking common in poststructuralism is an aversion towards essentialist thinking (Lyotard, 1996; Foucault, 1991). What May argues is that, from a poststructuralist perspective, power is decentralized and expressed in various instances by various people. One of the lessons that can be drawn from experiments with socialism in the twentieth century is that "*(…) changes of power at the top do not bring social transformation*" (May, 2010, p. 14). There are no oppressors holding the essence of power; power is distributed and exercised by all of us. Ultimately, what this means is that those who perceive themselves as being oppressed are holding themselves prisoners, as they cannot automatically escape the reigning discourses. By assuming a poststructuralist position, the core notion of having a top and a bottom in society becomes a misleading metaphor. What May (2010) argues from a poststructuralist perspective is that power is more decentralized than anarchist thinkers imagined. Power is performed not only by those we call the oppressor, but by the oppressed as well. A simplified point to take away from this is that we have a perspective that would argue that the oppressed, as Freire identifies them, are acting in ways that contribute to their own oppression. This is not an argument against education but a reinforcement of Freire's point, since it is through education that people can acquire the analytical skills necessary for them to become aware of and act upon unfavorable practices, as we cannot assume a priori what is acting against us. We need to discover it first (May, 2010, p. 53f). As for the second point, May makes the critical point that anarchism has assumed the good nature of mankind as a granted condition, a view most likely adopted from Jean-Jacques Rousseau. In the genealogies conducted by Foucault, a strong argument against this assumption is made. We cannot expect a person to be good because of their nature; not that it cannot happen, but it is not a given that humans without restraints would act better. It might be the other way around—a writer like Mikhail Bakunin also acknowledged this, and argued against viewing human beings as naturally benevolent (Morris, 1993, p. 88f). This is where education

becomes an important factor, since values and knowledge are elements the can be passed on. Judith Suissa (2010) frames the impending question precisely when she writes:

> "(…) we must question the very political framework within which we are operating, ask ourselves what kind of society would embody, for us, the optimal vision of 'the good life,' and then ask ourselves what kind (if any) of education system would exist in this society" (p. 4).

This is what Freire, along with many other scholars, has attempted. What is imagined is a world wherein there is an increase in equality and practical freedom. Freire (1968/2005) writes that "Freedom is acquired by conquest, not by gift. It must be pursued constantly and responsibly" (p. 47). To be free is a practice that requires constant action if it is to be realized. It is often through education that we are presented with the possibility of providing people with a democratic conception of the founding ideals of society. Through schooling, we are given the chance to interact across social groups and learn to recognize mutual interests, which are the fundamentals of democracy (Dewey, 2011, p. 49). Obviously, there are plenty of interests entangled in school systems around the world, where the fast-track education that follows from neoliberalism has been thoroughly criticized (Baltodano, 2012; Davies & Bansel, 2007). So education as it is today needs reform if it is to fully address what is called upon by Moghaddam, and we are to ensure a road to actualized democracy. For a democracy to be strong, it requires participation. There is a point I like to borrow from Jacques Rancière (2006) that a democracy based on representation quickly dissolves into a regime controlled by an elite (Gilens & Page, 2014), and it is only in more recent times that this has been considered democratic (Rancière, 2006, pp. 53 – 54). A popular mandate is provided through votes that are given once every four years. After an election term, politicians can to a degree ignore the founding base of their mandate and tend to public affairs in accordance with how they deem fit. Voting is not political participation, but a way of giving consent to being governed (Ibid). Luckily, many of the representative democracies still respect certain ideals such as holding free elections, personal liberties, and the freedom of the press, but a lot of decisions are still made behind closed doors and without further consent from the people. Only through an approach based on dialogue, which sees education as important for encouraging increased participation in the political and societal realm, can the seeds for a friendly revolution for an open democracy be planted. This

point neatly brings us to the next section of the chapter, where I will show how entrepreneurship education is already employing teaching tools and methods that welcome behavior and thinking in line with democratic ideals on behalf of its students.

Entrepreneurship Education and the Psychological Characteristics of the Democratic Citizen

Despite democracy not being an overwhelming aspect of entrepreneurship theory, it is still a topic that has been given attention. This section begins with an attempt to ground democracy in entrepreneurship, or vice versa, before getting to the educational aspect. Next, Moghaddam's characteristics of the democratic citizen will be presented and discussed before moving on to how entrepreneurship education can be framed as a tool for actualizing these characteristics. It is important to note that entrepreneurship education is not to be confused with entrepreneurialism, or whatever connotations might come to mind when 'the entrepreneur' is imagined. Entrepreneurship education is rather an attempt at either providing students with the concrete tools that are valuable in venture creation (such as learning to manage finances, create business plans, apply for funding, pitch ideas, etc.), or to provide them with an opportunity to explore an entrepreneurial side of themselves where they can experiment with entrepreneurial identities without making a firm commitment to any of them. An entrepreneurship education is not necessarily an entrepreneur factory. Students are different from entrepreneurs, after all, and in entrepreneurship education there is still an emphasis is on learning. The question then becomes how we can relate this educational practice to the promotion of democracy and democratic ideals.

Entrepreneurship and Democracy

Links between entrepreneurship and democracy have been discussed before. Joseph Schumpeter, who is widely regarded as one of the founding fathers of entrepreneurship theory, wrote the book *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy* in 1942. Schumpeter (1943/2003) envisioned a future where capitalism, which he saw as the economic system that had originally allowed democracy to flourish (Elliot, 1994, p. 281), would not survive, but be replaced with socialism. His argument was that, in time, intellectuals would turn critical towards ideas such as private property and the free market, which are crucial for keeping capitalism alive. These subversive approaches, along with increased unemployment and vanishing investment opportunities, would eventually bring about the demise of

capitalism (Schumpeter, 1943/2003, pp. 111 – 113). However, as history has proven, capitalism is remarkably resilient, although it has been halted amidst the boom of big businesses and the formation of oligopolies in various markets, which is exactly a sign of vanishing investment opportunities (Elliot, 1994, p. 294). This is where it was envisioned that the entrepreneur would step forward as an agent of creative destruction, constantly renewing the capitalist system by destroying old economic structures and replacing them with new ones (Schumpeter, 1943/2003, p. 83f). It is also entrepreneurs who are the creators of small and medium-sized businesses, which are a huge contributing factor to keeping the economy going and growing in opportunity societies (Acs, 2006), and might very well have helped to keep capitalism alive, as they act against the effects oligopolies create. It is also in these late stages of capitalism that Schumpeter saw the link between capitalism and democracy weakening, as the established, elitist institutions would begin to treat the people as a nuisance (Ibid., p. 295), and seek to rule on their behalf. The link can be said to be weakening, since Schumpeter saw democracy as something that developed in the wake of ancient and modern capitalism (Ibid., pp. 126f), but as capitalism develops, its ties to democratic practices weaken, as we can see through the increasing influence of big corporations in policy making, for example (Union of Concerned Scientists, 2012). This is hardly an encouraging starting point for the task of showing how entrepreneurship education can be helpful towards sustaining and improving democratic ways of life, and not just capitalism.

However, attempts have been made to reconcile entrepreneurship and democracy. Bellone and Goerl (1992) wrote a paper that provides us with examples of how entrepreneurial efforts with a strong focus on community could potentially help create opportunities where mutual aid could be given for solving shared issues, and also help bringing communities closer together. At the heart of actualizing democracy is ensuring that people engage themselves in politics. That is, engage themselves in how they wish govern and be governed. Creating a strong community where common issues are solved is dependent upon political intent from several parts of the community. However, ensuring that entrepreneurship would really be a helping force in this regard requires that the entrepreneurial process undergoes a change that allows for greater accountability, and an open policy-making process rather than relying on the secrecy, risk-taking, and autonomy that is often associated with entrepreneurship (Bellone & Goerl, 1992). Additionally, in the book *Disclosing New*

Worlds, Charles Spinosa, Fernando Flores, and Hubert L. Dreyfus (1997) argue that entrepreneurship, understood through the lens of phenomenology as a certain way of being in the world, actually ties strongly into democratic values. Becoming entrepreneurial changes the way we engage the world by making us more sensitive to what is bothering people in their lives, and equipping us with tools for how to relieve them. Inherent in the authors' conceptualization of entrepreneurship is *civic humanism* as an essential element that can be enhanced through entrepreneurship education (Spinosa, Flores, & Dreyfus, 1997, p. 70f). The authors of *Disclosing* New Worlds (1997) associate the concept of civic humanism to the work of Hannah Arendt. One of Arendt's most influential theoretical concepts is the distinction of human life into three different modes of being and living: labor, work, and action. By looking at Arendt's definition of action, we can find a good basis for reaching an understanding of civic humanism. For Arendt, the apex of the human condition is the *vita active.* The vita active cannot not be achieved through either labor, which is work aimed at taking care of the needs that are essential for the maintenance of the human existence (Arendt, 1998, p. 98f) or work, which signifies activities where we fabricate the parts of the world that separates humans from animals[1]. It is only through the actions we carry out that are an end in themselves (art is a typical example) and not determined by prior causes or future ends that we can enter the action domain where civic humanism prospers (Ibid., pp. 231 – 233). Arendt writes that,

> "For to make a statement about ends that do not justify all means is to speak in paradoxes, the definition of an end being precisely the justification of the means (…) As long as we believe that we deal with ends and means in the political realm, we shall not be able to prevent anybody's using all means to pursue recognized ends" (Arendt, 1998, p. 229).

For Arendt, there is a moral dimension tied into what she determines as actions ideal for the political realm. It is clear when looking at democracies that a mandate for ensuring economic growth is a bad match for political enterprises, as it affirms and allows the utilization of complex sets of means to achieve this end, which cannot all be justified within the frame of democracy. Furthermore, a part of Arendt's notion of action implies that it is a practice that has to be performed. Action is to do

[1] *Work* can involve the construction of buildings, establishing governing bodies and running them, medical work, and anything else that can be looked at as having an instrumental aim (Arendt, 1998., pp. 53f).

something because it is seems right in relation to others, not because it serves a certain purpose. Arendt's definition of the word *action* relies on the freedom and novelty that arises from the uncertain nature of acting without an obvious end (Arendt, 1998, pp. 231 – 233). Neither is freedom understood as something that can be achieved as an inner thing; it can only be actualized through actions that relate to other human beings. As previously discussed, this is not unlike how Freire thought about it. In the same manner, Spinosa et al. (1997) firmly distinguish their perspective on the entrepreneur as different from Schumpeter's version of the entrepreneur as a revitalizing economic force, instead setting the entrepreneur into a context that is firmly rooted in everyday life and practice. Being entrepreneurial is not exclusively about venture creation; it is also a way of being in the world that calls for greater social engagement. It is a way of being aware of potential problems where one, rather than sitting back, offers to take part in achieving a solution or providing an alternative by committing oneself to be responsible towards the well-being of others as well as oneself. This ideal of what entrepreneurship either is or can be, depending on whom you ask (I would go with saying that it is a potential not realized), exactly embodies many of the characteristics that Moghaddam points to.

Being entrepreneurial relies a great deal on novelty, in the sense that it requires one to look at the world with eyes that are open for reinterpreting commonly held beliefs or notions that are taken for granted. Spinosa et al. describes what entrepreneurs are doing as holding on to perceived anomalies that they experience in their everyday life (Spinosa et al, 1997, p. 66f). The entrepreneur then makes it clear how the anomaly is related to the world s/he embodies, but once this is done the entrepreneur will seek to qualify their thinking further by discussing it with more people and/or testing ideas in order to gauge how others' experiences relate to their own so that they might learn from it (Ibid., p. 50). It is a process full of uncertainty, as a lot of flexibility and adaption is required to become successful. Of course entrepreneurship education can be seen as highly instrumentalized, because of its deep-rooted connection to venture creation. Yet, by looking at the entrepreneurial process divorced from "business thinking," as Spinosa et al. manage to do, another image arises to some extent. A lot of what is entailed in civic humanism can be found reiterated here, as argued by Bellone and Goerl (1992), but, as they also remind us, core concepts inherent to entrepreneurship would need to change for it to become a viable force that is progressive in a democratic sense.

Entrepreneurship, therefore, as is also argued by Brush, Neck, and Greene (2015), needs to be taught as a method rather than a set of textbook skills, since it "(…) encourages our students to go beyond rote memorization of the content of a discipline and, instead, to navigate the discipline" (p. 41). This is, in essence, an adoption of the point made by Spinosa et al. (1997) to view entrepreneurship as a way of being in the world, as opposed to it being a mere economic or personal instrument meant to increase wealth. It is by focusing on this as something that is possibly achievable through entrepreneurship education, that I suggest that educational field as one path through which we can strengthen education for democracy. Yet we still have to bear in mind that possibility is not the same as reality. We are a far cry from separating entrepreneurship education from economic interests and entirely turning it towards civic or democratic ones. Still, it is an idea worth exploring, and a good beginning is to establish a link between entrepreneurship education and civic and democratic ideals in order to legitimize the idea. The link between entrepreneurship education and democracy is not made up, but it is contingent on a certain way of understanding entrepreneurship education. In the following section, Moghaddam's characteristics will be presented and discussed with the above in mind.

Promoting Democratic Characteristics through Entrepreneurship Education

The background Moghaddam (in this volume) has for selecting the following traits remain a bit obscure, but it is safe to say that they appear to make sense for strengthening and actualizing democratic processes. It is important to note that these are not definitive, but rather work as a template from which philosophical and psychological discussion can begin. The following characteristics are the ones Moghaddam identifies as encapsulating the democratic citizen:

- I could be wrong.
- Not all experiences are of equal value.
- I must critically question everything, including the sacred beliefs of my society.
- I must revise my opinion as the evidence requires.
- I must seek to better understand those who are different from me.
- I can learn from those who are different from me.

- I must seek information and opinions from as many sources as possible.
- I should be actively open to new experiences.
- I should be open to creating new experiences for others.
- There are principles of right and wrong.

In Moghaddam's original presentation (Ibid) the characteristics were presented in a wheel, which implies that none of these traits take precedence; all are equally important. Moghaddam focuses on the individual person in his attempt to analyze the needed characteristics for a democratic citizen, but also acknowledges that these traits have to be achieved by the entire population in order for them to have any sort of effect towards change (Ibid., p. 17). This could easily be criticized as approaching the topic of democracy in a way that is too idealized. As I previously asked, how are people living under oppressive regimes supposed to do this when circumstances clearly do not allow them to act on or express certain thoughts? Likewise, many of Moghaddam's points speak against or fail to regard commonly recognized biases in human cognition, including confirmation bias (Nickerson, 1998), anchoring (Tversky & Kahneman, 1975), group thinking (Janis, 1971), and stereotyping (Macrae, Strangor, & Hewstone, 1996). Yet, as we also know, the way to overcome many of these inherent cognitive biases is to engage with the world around us through exposure in order to gain awareness of how our conduct is perceived by others. It is through these means, in which education plays no small part, that we learn how to counter our biases. According to Suissa (2010), it can be the role of education to "*systematically promote and emphasize cooperation, solidarity, and mutual aid*" (p. 32). The collaborative aspect is another one that we seem to be able to strengthen through entrepreneurship education (though this is not exclusive to this kind of education) by teaching students to think along a perspective of *we* rather than *I* (Tanggaard, Warhuus, Robinson & Ernø, in press).

The way entrepreneurship is presented by Spinosa et al. (1997), Bellone and Goerl (1994), and Brush et al. (2015) does bear witness to the fact that more is brought to the table than simply a matter of creating and growing businesses. In it, we can find methods that improve and train students' abilities that are very similar to the characteristics identified by Moghaddam. One entrepreneurship course that I attended both as a student and a researcher put great emphasis on teaching students a variety

of methods that are as applicable to everyday life as they are to venture creation. As we can see in the following overview of some of the teaching methods employed in the course, they translate quite well into being supportive and generative of Moghaddam's characteristics. Below are some examples of what the student were taught are and how they relate to the characteristics of democratic citizens:

- Appreciative inquiry was enforced as an overall approach to all conversations about the students' projects – this harmonized well with the sentiment to *be actively open to new experiences* and to *seek to better understand those who are different from me.*

- There were various methods where the teachers sought to sensitize students towards anomalies in their own everyday life—this teaches students to be *actively open to new experiences.*

- The teachers had the students critically examine their ideas by interviewing each other—these methods could be helpful for making the students realize that *I can learn from those who are different from me* and that *I could be wrong.*

- In group work, the students had to abandon their individual ideas and find common ground by selecting one idea as their main one—here the students are exposed to how *not all experiences are of equal value.*

- The students were taught about prototyping their ideas in small groups, and also had to go and talk to people outside of the classroom about them, which meant that the students confronted many different elements about their ideas—through these assignments the students experienced having to *critically question everything*, and also got experience with *creating new experiences for others*.

While entrepreneurship education does not include elements such as teaching students right from wrong, or necessarily how to understand those different from themselves, there is still a vast space

where values similar to those identified as good in a democratic sense are practiced. The main challenge will, of course, be to weed out any unwanted elements. While it is easy to single out capitalist interests in entrepreneurship education, there is still the need to consider whether it is possible at this point in time to completely escape capitalism. A capitalist system is not inherently evil; as pointed out by Schumpeter, it is with the coming of the capitalist system that many hierarchical structures fell and more democratic practices arose as new kinds of structures. But now that capitalism is the dominating economic structure, it has become a rigid framework that we can scarcely imagine how to challenge. Capitalism has become axiomatic, and the mechanisms by which it operates are obscured. But if we reject capitalism or a similar system, how are we supposed to live? We have built a system that relies on experts, so how can more power be given to the people if we as a start cannot even look at them as competent? The point of promoting a democratically-oriented approach to education is to explore whether there is then any room left for new and better structures to arise. Entrepreneurship education inherently challenges complacency, which is what we are struggling against when we live in a time where the end of the world is easier to imagine than the end of capitalism.

However, one problem that pertains to education in general, and entrepreneurship education in particular, is the instrumentalized system that implicitly draws a line between failures and successes among the students. Freire's (1968/1995) perspective on traditional education is to compare it with a banking model, which expresses the tendency among teachers of treating students as empty bank accounts that need to be filled with deposits. This leaves open the possibility of judging a student to be either a success or a failure depending on how well they are able to receive and store their "*deposits*." This essentially amounts to objectifying them, and thereby turning them into instruments that can be rejected according to how well they are doing. Instead, we should create an education for democracy, where the focus should be on making each student achieve the best that they can, not on optimizing the educational program for just a few people. Our current system is like trying to turn lead into gold, rather than just working with all the useful properties that we have at hand. The criteria for being counted among the successful ones in entrepreneurial courses is to be deemed 'able to succeed' based on one's ideas as judged by the teacher. While teachers have tremendous experience, even they are not able to predict with any certainty what the next big idea is. The problem

is that students are objectified through this process, becoming numbers in an endless row of statistics that determine which efforts are worth the investment. In that game, you are either a success or a failure, and that is not enough. In addition, the students are subjected into adopting the same line of thinking about themselves (Ernø & Tanggaard, forthcoming), which not only makes them failures to the policy makers and teachers, but also to themselves. This subjugates the students in accordance with the implicit perspectives that come from the economic roots of entrepreneurship. If entrepreneurship education is to become something else, it must be divorced from its role as an economic instrument and reconfigured into a practice based on promoting democratic ideals instead. So, while entrepreneurship education can be a key to looking beyond the status quo, it is also part of sustaining the world as it is. This reality is, of course, a severe limitation that needs to be considered, and such elements need to be addressed thoroughly before entrepreneurship education can truly be considered an option for using education to promote democracy.

Conclusions

There is a lot of promise in entrepreneurship education. There is the promise of a didactic focus where students are allowed to experiment with techniques that are valuable for democratic thinking, such as learning appreciative inquiry in order to listen others with an open mind, which can help with minimizing confirmation bias and stereotyping. Likewise, entrepreneurship education presents students with an opportunity to explore how they can contribute something of value to others in society. They get to play with how they think about themselves and their role in the future. It is an education that focuses highly on the impact one can have by engaging oneself in the world. This is highly needed for democracies to flourish by providing a public that participates. My experience from the field, at least, suggests that engagement in the public sphere can be promoted through education to a greater degree than we are already doing. In that sense, entrepreneurship education seems like it is made for actualizing democracy. This is a very limited perspective; perhaps even just an illusion that has been conjured to show us what it could be. Entrepreneurship education has potential, but its current status is that it is a very imperfect match for democratic education. This chapter calls out how entrepreneurship education both objectifies and subjugates its students by subtly inducting them into thinking of themselves as instruments that will power the economy. This seems like an unproductive approach both economically and democratically, as a lot of resources are wasted on

promoting only a few success stories, compared to the vast number of aspiring entrepreneurs that never amount to anything. In conclusion, it can be said that, while there is potential, as has been imagined in this chapter, for using entrepreneurship education as a path to actualizing democracy, a tremendous amount of work is still required for it to become what it could possibly be. However, the important aspect to consider is that doing so presents us with a project that can be approached pragmatically to sustain change. This project is a way not to think about why we should do something or what it could be, but instead deal with '*how* we can actualize democracy.'

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